

Condo redux

A worldly couple transforms a dated home into a French/Asian Colonial dream reminding them of years in Hong Kong

BY LINDA DONNELLY

linda.donnelly@floridaweekly.com

Here are some common complaints from homeowners needing a remodel: The ceilings are too low. The spaces feel narrow and confined. There's too much mirror. The floral wallpaper is old-fashioned, and the cabinetry is clunky.

And here is the confident response from Jinx McDonald Interior Designs to a client on the bay side of Gulf Shore Boulevard with one such dated mess: We've got this!

This couple has had an adventurous life traveling throughout the globe and wanted to bring a bit of that French/Asian Colonial look to their "new" Naples condo. It would require a lot more than a new rug and fresh paint. The team at Jinx McDonald Interior Designs needed to move walls, rip out floors, add and update trim work, reconfigure closets and add cabinetry, built-in shelving and a new kitchen island. This was a true transformation from old to new.

The tired trend of using mirrored walls to create the illusion of more space is officially gone for good. Instead, today's designers and builders are using larger windows, expansive sliding doors, higher ceilings and lighter paint colors for even better results.

Starting with all the floors, it was clear that the carpeting throughout and the linoleum kitchen floor were of course, not desirable. A new mix of light and dark, the updated flooring is a combination of a wool blend sisal used wall-to-wall in the main living areas, a beautiful dark, wire-brushed hardwood in the kitchen and refreshed tile in the bathrooms.

"This client knew what they wanted," explains Minka McDonald, designer and daughter of founder Jinx McDonald. "They spent years abroad in Hong Kong, and wanted to bring a bit of that old world Colonial style to Naples."

The kitchen was perhaps the most dramatic result of the team's efforts. The "before" is the traditional galley design with a narrow footprint and very little prep/work space. By removing the entire wall on which the range was originally placed, Ms. McDonald was able to create the open floor plan that most homeowners want today. The new island provides tremendous storage as well as a new workspace that allows the hosts to stay connected with their guests. All new custom cabinetry and countertops in bright white, and transitional pendant light fixtures that tie in to the main fixture in the dining room, add the perfect touches to the final "great room" mixed-use space.

Ms. McDonald brought a bold color palette of java, navy, white and red throughout. A focal point is the rich background created by the metallic-backed woven Phillip Jeffries wallpaper used in the living room and breakfast room. Fans and hardware all got an update and were selected to keep in line with the Colonial Asian style.

"Overall the space feels bigger, brighter and much more open," Ms. McDonald says. "And it has the elegant, old world styling the couple so desired." ■

— Jinx McDonald Interior Designs
1959 Trade Center Way
598-4800, ext. 3; jinxmcdonald.com

COURTESY PHOTOS



Above: Red Chippendale chairs, an Asian-style dining table with a java finish, a large espresso sideboard with rattan detailing and natural woven shades in a rich java finish create a Colonial aesthetic.



Right: Removing the wall between the kitchen and living room transformed the old galley kitchen and completely opened up the condo. Crisp white cabinetry, Carrara quartz countertops and a continuous backsplash assist in enlarging the space.



Above: The master bath was remade with a Carrara marble basketweave floor, Carrara tile shower walls and new cabinetry with a stunning Diamond Crystal Quartzite top and a botanical motif sink.



Above right: A Phillip Jeffries woven metallic wallpaper provides an updated take on grasscloth, and creates a rich background for the new built-in with lattice detailing.